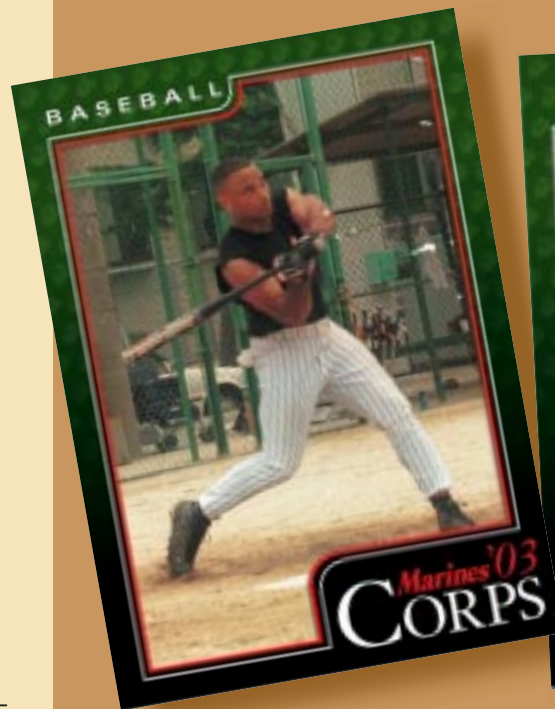
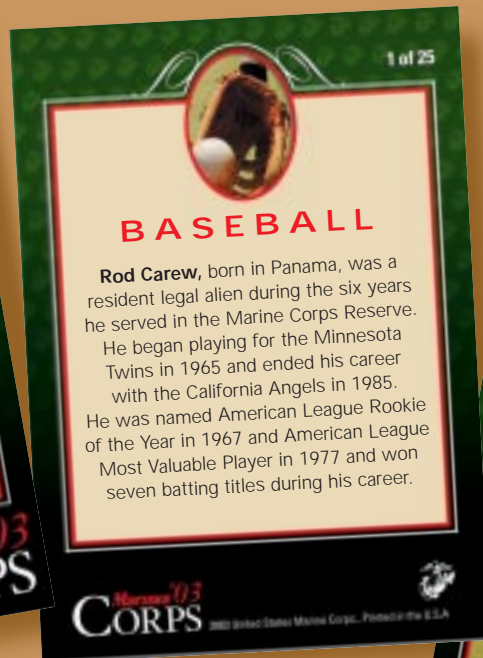


Marines BASEBALL & SOFTBALL



▲ **Luther Gibbs**, swings for the fences during an intramural softball game. Gibbs was selected to tryout for the All Marine Softball Team. Photo by Lance Cpl. Ben Slack



Rod Carew, born in Panama, was a resident legal alien during the six years he served in the Marine Corps Reserve. He began playing for the Minnesota Twins in 1965 and ended his career with the California Angels in 1985. He was named American League Rookie of the Year in 1967 and American League Most Valuable Player in 1977 and won seven batting titles during his career.

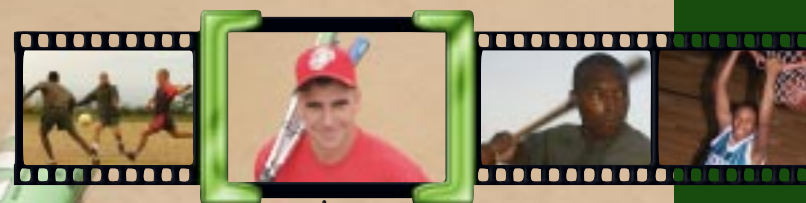


▼ **Mary K. Flatley**, commanding officer of Oscar Company, 4th Recruit Training Battalion, goes through her warm-up drills at the depot softball fields before the start of the All-Marine Women's Softball tryouts.

Photo by Cpl. Eric Lucero



The USMC Men's Softball team captured the Silver Medal Aug. 22-24 in the Armed Forces Softball Championships at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. **Gunnery Sgt. Cherylon McRae**, **Gunnery Sgt. Todd Tapper**, **Staff Sgt. Tyrone Butler**, **Staff Sgt. Lonnie Dillard**, and **Sgt. Clint Hiller** were selected to the Armed Forces team. The team was coached by USMC coaches **Master Sgt. Scotty Cobb** and **Gunnery Sgt. Jerry Perez**.



< **The 2001 All Marine** softball coach, **Ron Linke** has been one of the Marine Corps' most successful coaches at both the intra-mural and regional level.

Photo by John Ralfsnider

'Play Ball!'

By Staff Sgt. Cindy Fisher
HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, Washington

Baseball

The exact origins of baseball are clouded in mystery, myth and speculation. But for the last century and a half, baseball has been touted as America's favorite pastime. Whether it was invented by Abner Doubleday or just evolved from a variety of bat and ball games brought from England by colonists settling the "new world," the "national game" has formed a permanent niche in American culture today. From coaching base Little League teams to playing pick up games in the field and even in the Major Leagues, Marines too have participated in the baseball experience.

Some, like Hall of Famers **Rod Carew** and **Robert Clemente Walker**, have served in the Marine Corps or Marine Corps Reserves and then went on to earn greatness on the playing field. Others, such as **Jerry Coleman** and Hall of Famer **Ted Williams**, interrupted their baseball careers to serve in the Corps in combat when the nation called.

Softball

Like baseball, the antecedents of softball are unclear. The game has been played since the early twentieth century and gained national interest in the United States in the 1930s. For Marines, playing softball can be a serious business, especially at the All Marine level, said **Master Sgt. M. Scotty Cobb**, the coach for this year's All Marine Men's Softball team.

Semper Fit runs softball leagues on most installations. On Camp Lejeune alone, a base with roughly 45,000 Marines, there are probably 40 to 50 softball teams with about 15 players per team, said Cobb. In addition, most major subordinate commands field a softball team to compete in the Marine Corps Regionals, held on the East and West coasts, and in the Far East.

While the teams compete to win the bragging rights as the best at their regional level, individual players showcase their skills in hopes of invitations to that year's All Marine Trials Softball Camp. **M**

Baseball Movies

Pride of the Yankees (1942) – Portrays the life of baseball great Lou Gehrig and includes a cameo by Babe Ruth.

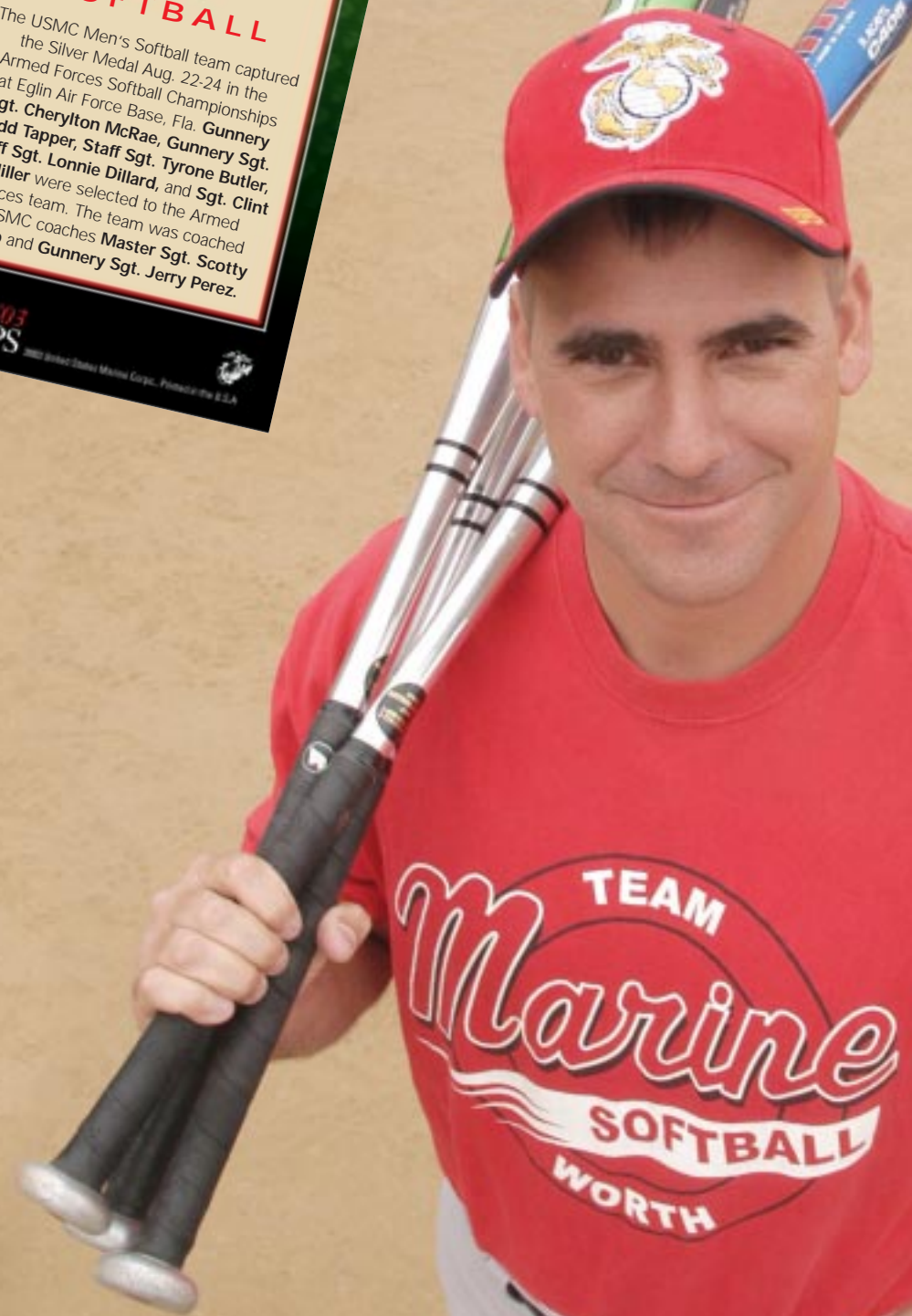
The Babe Ruth Story (1948) – Was released a month after the 'Babe' died of cancer.

The Winning Team (1952) – Stars Ronald Reagan as Hall of Fame pitcher Grover Cleveland Alexander.

Damn Yankees (1958) – A musical about a man who sells his soul to beat the Yankees.

Bad News Bears (1976) – Features Walter Mathou as the coach of the most unlikely Little League team to ever win a championship.

The Natural (1984) – Features Robert Redford as a 'never was' player making a come back.





Eight Men Out (1988) – Starring John Cusack and Charlie Sheen tells the story of the 1919 Chicago White Sox team members who conspired to fix the World Series.

Bill Durham (1988) – Starring Kevin Costner, Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins, this is a romantic comedy set in single-A baseball.

Field of Dreams (1988) – Also starring Kevin Costner, it's about an Iowa farmer who builds a baseball field, which draws dead baseball legends to play.



▲ **Navy second baseman, Ray Judy**, leaps for the ball as the Marine Corps' Brian Pinson slides into second during the 14th Annual Navy/Marine All-Star baseball game at Qualcomm Stadium. The Navy won, 5-3.

Photo by John Raifsnider

Major League (1989) – Starring Charlie Sheen features an oddball underdog team determined to win.

A League of Their Own (1992) – Starring Tom Hanks, Madonna, Rosie O'Donnel and Gina Davis is about an all girls baseball league formed while male baseball players were fighting in World War II.

The Sandlot (1993) – Is a coming of age story that unfolds in a neighborhood makeshift baseball field.

Cobb (1994) – Stars Tommie Lee Jones in the title roll about "the meanest man to ever play the game."



▼ **Reminiscent of 'A League of Their Own,'** Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Community Services funded a softball league for the wives and daughters of deployed Marines. The league had six teams that played a game per week and were often better attended than the men's games.

Photo by John Raifsnider

Baseball Foods

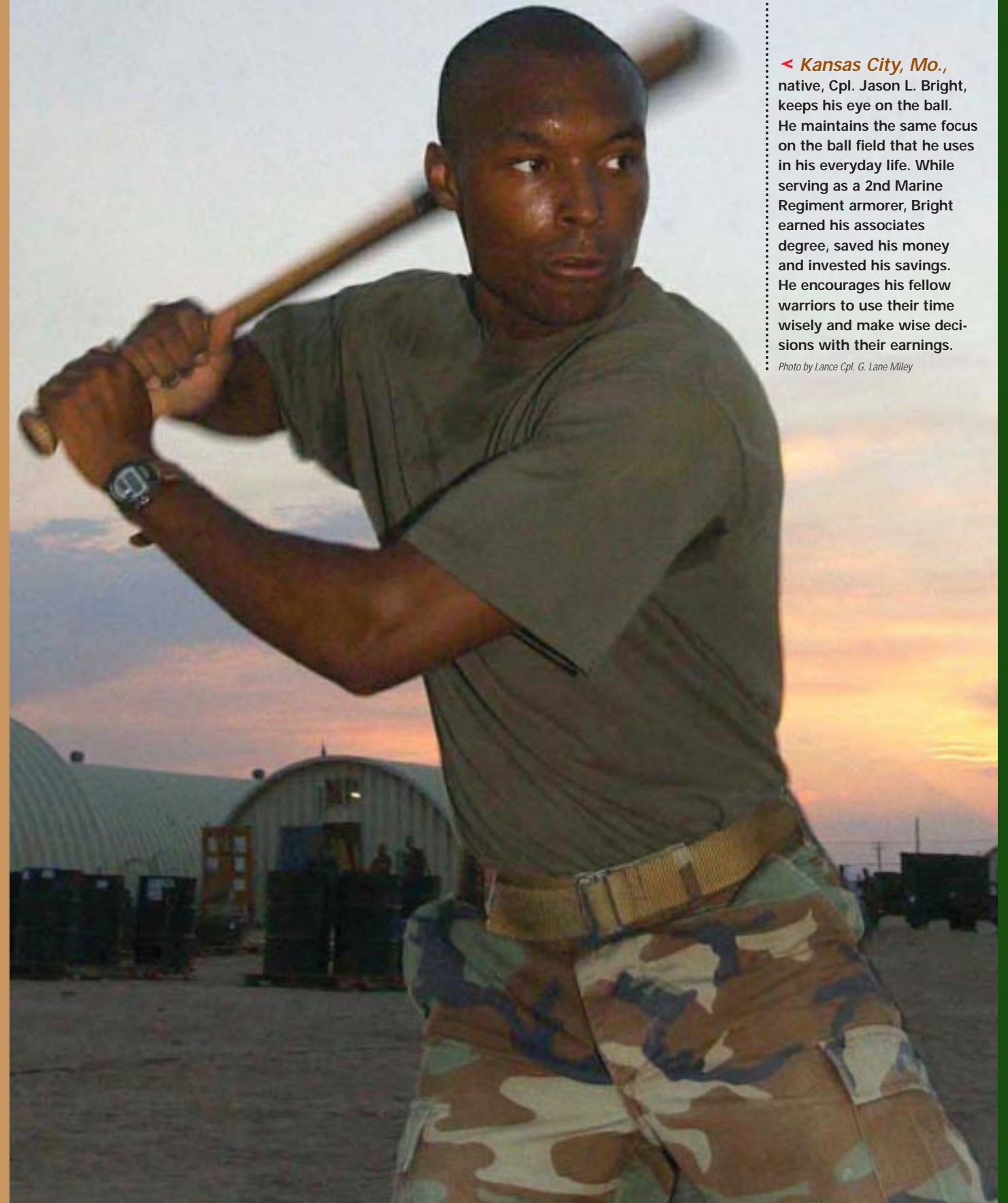
Baseball just wouldn't be *Baseball* without the following:

- Peanuts
- Soft Pretzels
- Cracker Jacks
- Hot Dogs
- Baby Ruth (The candy bar...)
- Nachos & Cheese
- Popcorn
- Beer (It's not a "food" but it has to be mentioned...)



▲ **Kara Johnson, 12**, helped pitch her Camp Pendleton Little League All-Star team into the second round of the 2002 playoffs.

Photo by John Raifsnider



◀ **Kansas City, Mo.,** native, Cpl. Jason L. Bright, keeps his eye on the ball. He maintains the same focus on the ball field that he uses in his everyday life. While serving as a 2nd Marine Regiment armorer, Bright earned his associates degree, saved his money and invested his savings. He encourages his fellow warriors to use their time wisely and make wise decisions with their earnings.

Photo by Lance Cpl. G. Lane Milley

